

ENGLISH 9 / Spring 2005

Introduction to Literary Analysis

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Class meetings: Mon. & Wed., 2:30-3:45 p.m. LC 16
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Texts & Performances

Books

R.S. Gwynn. *Poetry: A Pocket Anthology*, 4 th ed. Penguin, 2004.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* **Arden Shakespeare edition** ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, 1999. PLEASE BUY THIS EDITION OF THE PLAY, NOT ANOTHER. YOU WILL BE READING ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FROM THIS BOOK, NOT JUST THE PLAY!

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (Bedford Cultural Edition), ed. William E. Cain. Bedford, 1996. PLEASE BUY THIS EDITION OF THE NOVEL, NOT ANOTHER (see above).

Toni Morrison, *Paradise*. Plume, 1999 .

Performances and Readings

S.K.Toth's "Festad" (weather permitting) see www.skthoth.com/SKTHOTH/Home_Pagex.html > (**encouraged**)

The Tempest (Drew T.V.) date and time t.b.a. (**Required**)

The Laramie Project A Drew University Theatre Arts Dept., & DUDS production, March 2-5 (**Required**)

Kevin Young t.b.a. (February) (**Required**)

Mark Doty t.b.a (late February, Early March) (**Required**)

Schedule

Week 1

Monday, January 31:

Class: **No class today. Please show up to the classroom OR read email!**

Homework: Read Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan" (Gwynn 132) and write a response to it paying attention to the words. If you read and discussed this poem in high school, try to forget that and just focus on the words as if you have never read the poem before. If you have never read the poem before you will be at a slight advantage here! As you read, pay careful attention to the sounds of the words and the combinations of words. Think about the sound of the overall poem as it moves through the various stages of the description. Where does the mood change? How does the language make that happen? Think about images as well, but don't go into discussions of Coleridge's life or drug use. Focus on the poem as if you just found it in a treasure chest and knew nothing about the author, the context, or Kubla Khan. In your response to the poem, play literary critic as you imagine that term. What is going on here? How? Send this response to me via email (sjamieso@drew.edu) OR just bring it to class on Wednesday.

Wednesday, February 2:

Class: Introduction, discussion of theme of the class. Introductions to each other, the class, things you like to read—and dislike. The role of reading in imagining—and creating—other worlds. Discussion of "Kubla Khan" and the homework assignment. Focus on the words, the images, the movement of emotion through the text. What is going on here? How does Coleridge make us feel the way we do as we read these lines?

Homework: Read Louise Glück's poem "The School Children" (copy handed out in class). What is happening in each of the stanzas? How do the various roles change through the poem? Which words and images does Glück use to make this happen? Pay attention to repetition of sounds and ideas and the way subtle changes in those repetitions change the way we experience the things in question. Also pay attention to unexpected words, the effects of enjambment, verb tense changes, and shifts in spatial relation of the events in the poem.

Terminology review: enjambment, assonance, repetition, verb tense, image, association.

Virtual class (here's a [link to the class](#); and here's [information](#) about this component of the class): First pass: Describe yourself as a literary critic. What kinds of writing about literature have you found most satisfying? What is the goal of literary criticism? What kind of "moves" do you make as an interpreter of literature (what are your strategies for interpretation?)

Week 2

Monday, February 7:

Class: The role of the strange/unexpected word and the power of metaphor. We will discuss Louise Glück's poem "The School Children" (copy handed out in class 2/2). What is happening in each of the stanzas? How do the various roles change through the poem? Which words and images does Glück use to make this happen? Pay attention to repetition of sounds and ideas and the way subtle changes in those repetitions change the way we experience the things in question. Also pay attention to unexpected words, the effects of enjambment, verb tense changes, and shifts in spatial relation of the events in the poem. Then look at e.e. cummings' "in just—" (copy handed out in class 2/2) and apply the same analysis to it. Copies of poetry by Kevin Young will be handed out to prepare for the reading on Tuesday 8th.

Homework: Based on our analysis of form in "in just—", what is going on in the poem? As with the notion of the apple for the teacher in "School Children," you will need to look outside of the poem for at least one of the images; however, attend very carefully to the words, sounds, and rhythms cummings selected and their overall effect. Your goal is not to tell us what cummings "meant," but to tell us what the poem seems to be "about"—what is going on? Offer an interpretation beginning with a statement about what seems to be going on in this poem. (If you are not sure how to write about and cite poetry correctly, see the guidelines at www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/literature.htm)

Read the poems by Kevin Young handed out in class today, and plan to attend the reading tomorrow.

Tuesday, February 8: 7:00 pm. ARTS 106. [Kevin Young](#) will be at Drew for a public reading and discussion of his work. Please plan to attend this reading so that we can discuss the effect of poetry as performance in class on Wednesday.

Wednesday, February 9:

Class: Sounds and language. We will briefly discuss what you found in "in just—" and the overall effect these features seem to have for you. Then we will discuss Kevin Young's poetry and reading (copies handed out in class on 2/7) and a poem by Mark Doty who will read at Drew on March 28. In preparation for that reading and as part of our discussion of the sound of poetry, we will listen to a recording of the Doty reading the poems we discuss. We will pay careful attention to the effect of sounds and word choices and the way they work together to give us a sense of the feeling of the poem and to enhance the content.

Homework: Instead of responding to a poem tonight, I'd like you to respond to the idea of responding to poems. Read the handout from Helen Vendler 39-47 and 152-157 (copy handed out in class 2/2) and think about what she is doing. As she responds to the poems in these sections. What kinds of moves does she make as a literary critic? How do you react to them? Did her methods help you to see more within the poems? Do you like her strategies for breaking open or unpacking a poem? As a fellow literary critic, what can you imagine doing in the same way as Vendler? What did you not find so useful?

Reviewing terminology: alliteration, assonance, consonance, formalism, allusion, assertion

Week 3

Monday, February 14:

Class: Context and images. We will begin with a discussion of your role as literary critics. How is it going? Do you like reading this way? Where is formalism frustrating? Where is it illuminating? Unless anyone wants us to revisit the poems that Vendler discusses, we will apply her comments to another poem that she does not discuss in the section you read, Gwendolyn Brook's "We Real Cool" (Gwynn 280). **Introduction of the topic for Paper #1 (Due March 11).**

Homework: Look at John Keats' poem "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (Gwynn 146) and Helen Vendler's discussion of how to unpack it on pages 125-134 (copy handed out in class 2/2) and respond to this reading and the extent to which it works for you. What does it reveal about the poem? What does it reveal about reading poems? We will practice using this terminology in class on Tuesday, so think about how we might apply it (and the list on page 134) to another poem.

Terminology review: relations (thematic, phonemic, grammatical, syntactic); word function (subject, predicate, nouns, verbs); meaning; emotional curve.

Wednesday, February 16:

Class: poetic structure (images in sequences) and speech acts. We will review the terms Vendler discusses on 125-34 (copy handed out in class 2/2) and then apply them (and the list on 134) to at least one poem, beginning by looking at speech acts in Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Oh, Oh, You Will Be Sorry for that Word" (Gwynn 245) and Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" (Gwynn 266). Then we will discuss speech acts and images in Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (Gwynn 182-3).

Homework: In this response, select one of the poems we discussed in class today and use Vendler to help you comment on the poem in more depth. Again, look at what is "going on" in the poem. Who is the speaker in the poem addressing? Who does the poem itself seem to be addressing? What is the effect of these different audiences and speech acts (the audience internal to the poem and us, the readers; the speech acts within the poem and the poem itself)? Consider the effect these poets might have created if they had made different choices and say something about the impact of the choices they did make. In other words, I'd like you to respond as a literary critic, discussing the poet's moves and how and why they do or do not work.

Terminology review: meaning; emotional curve (skeleton); antecedent scenario; climax; agency; speech act.

Week 4

Monday, February 21:

Class: Narrative & Lyric poems. We will briefly discuss Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (Gwynn 182-3) and Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" (Gwynn 266) and the difference between "lyric poems" and "ballad" or narrative poems. Then we will discuss at least one narrative poem, "Bonny Barbara Allan" (Gwynn 59) and perhaps Robert Burns' "John Barleycorn" (Gwynn 114). What makes the ballad form work and how does it differ from the lyric? What makes "My Papa's Waltz" a ballad? How is "Dover Beach" different? What is a poem anyway? (Just checking to see if you are paying attention.) See Gwynn p. 9-12 if you want another explanation of all this.

Homework: Find the words of a song that meet the definition of either a lyric poem or a ballad, print them out and bring a copy to class Thursday. **WARNING:** this is not as easy as it sounds. The first three songs you think of won't work. You need to be able to apply the terms Vendler discusses on p. 125-34 of the handout (copy handed out in class 1/29) and the list on p. 134 and come up with something more interesting than "blah blah blah." If you find good song/poems I may invite you to write about them as one option for paper #1.

Hint: if it sounds like Hallmark it isn't a poem--and it will bring on my allergies and make me sneeze!

Terminology review: content genres, autobiography, love-poem; speech acts, confessional narration, meditation; outer form.

Wednesday, February 23:

Class: Sonnets (sonnetto's, "little songs"). Shakespearean (English) form and Italian (Petrarchan) form. We

will discuss examples of each in class, including Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 "My Mistress' Eyes" (Gwynn 71) and John Keats' "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (Gwynn 146-7) again. Then we will look back at Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Oh, Oh, You Will Be Sorry for that Word" (Gwynn 245) and see whether reading it as an English Sonnet helps us to understand anything we missed last week.

Homework: Review what Gwynn says about poetry in her introduction (1-45) and what Vendler said in the handout we've been using in class and use this to do a reading of the song you selected Tuesday. Don't listen to the music--try to forget that there is music--just focus on the words. Don't worry about the terminology in Gwynn either (especially feet and metre). What I want you to do is to get a sense of how poetic language works, the moves poets make, the clues they leave, and the options you have as readers. Tell me what is going on in your song and how you know that. This may form a rough draft of paper #1 if you do it well enough.

Terminology review: octave, sestet, quatrain, couplet, thematic break

Week 5

Monday, February 28:

Class: Politics and places. How do poets use identity and voice for political purposes in their poems? We will look at a poem in which the author adopts an identity different than his own, William Blake's "The Little Black Boy" (Gwynn 111); one in which the author uses his own identity, and mistaken identity, to make a point, Sherman Alexie's "On The Amtrack from Boston to New York City" (Vendler 251-2--available in class), and Lorna Dee Cervantes "Poem for a Young White Man Who Asked Me How I, an Intelligent, Well-Read Person Could Believe in the War Between the Races" (Vendler 415-416--also available in class). I will hand out extracts from *The Laramie Project*, which you should plan to see sometime between March 2 and March 5 (see below).

Homework: Read Wilfred Owen's poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" (Gwynn 246) and respond to the way he uses form to add power to content. The form, like that of Blake's "Little Black Boy," is "heroic quatrain." Use your notes from class today to help you think about the ways that a poem is so much more than just words.

Virtual Class: Use this chance to say anything you wanted to say about the poems we discussed in class today but did not have chance to say . . .

Reviewing terminology: heroic quatrain, universal speaker, pathos, persona,

Wednesday, March 2:

Class: Looking outside the poem: Ekphrasis. Literally the description of a visual image in words. In this case, the use of a painting as the basis for a poem. We will look at images and poems I will hand out in class. I will also sign people up to meet and discuss paper #1 (due on Friday, March 11th by 6 pm).

Homework: Finish writing up the discussion of the second poem and image we discussed in class. Focus on the images created in the poem and the sounds of the words as well as the word choices.

Virtual Class: list the song you are writing about and briefly summarize what you think is going on. Feel free to actually discuss each other's songs!

Sometime between March 2 and March 5, attend a performance of *The Laramie Project*, produced by the Drew Theatre Arts Department and DUDS, and performed in the F.M.Kirby Shakespeare Theatre (see website for more information: <http://www.depts.drew.edu/thea/seasons/index.htm>)

Additional Virtual Class: write a response to *The Laramie Project*.

Week 6

Monday, March 7:

Class: Introduction to drama as performance. Bring your copy of Shakespeare's *Tempest* to class. ALSO, bring your notes from and copy of *The Laramie Project*. Liz Green, the student director of *The Laramie Project* will come to class and discuss the play and the process of moving from text to production. How does one imagine a play and bring it to life on the stage? We will read the first scene of *The Tempest* aloud and

discuss reading plays as a performance (see handout available in class and via the K:drive "Resources" folder).
Homework: Read *The Tempest*. We will work through it as performance in class on Wednesday, but you need to have read it through once and worked out what is going on!
Virtual Class: tell everyone what song you are writing about and briefly summarize what you think is going on in it. Feel free to actually discuss each other's songs!

Wednesday, March 9:

Class: Continue to work through *The Tempest* discussing it as performance.

Homework: Before or after the break, watch the BBC version of *The Tempest* on Drew T.V. (LC 30, 7:30 pm). This is a rather dated performance of Shakespeare. Think of it as a performance and consider the moves the director made. What effect do they have? What effect do you think he is going after? Look at costume, movement, and characterization. What do they tell you about the interpretation this performance is advancing? How might you have done things differently? What effect would your choices have made?

Virtual Class: Post your comments on *The Tempest*.

Friday March 11: Paper #1 due in the box outside my office in S.W.Bowne by 6 p.m. today.

Week 7

spring break--sleep, eat, hang out, reread *The Tempest* . . .

Week 8

Sometime this week, watch the BBC version of *The Tempest* (LC 30, 7:30 pm on Wednesday, or in the library on reserve) or one of the other versions of *The Tempest* on reserve for this class in the library (if you are interested in performance you may want to watch more than one version and compare them for paper #2). The BBC version is rather dated--think of it as a performance and consider the moves the director made. What effect do they have? What effect do you think he is going after? Look at costume, movement, and characterization. What do they tell you about the interpretation this performance is advancing? How might you have done things differently? What effect would your choices have made?

Virtual Class: By Tuesday 23, post your comments on whichever version of *The Tempest* you watched.

Monday, March 21:

Class: Discussion characterization in *The Tempest* and our imaginations of it. Different images of Caliban, Ariel, Miranda, and Prospero. How does this change our understanding of the play?

Homework: Each group will read two extracts from xxxxx or one of my handouts.

Virtual Class: Briefly summarize the essays or extracts you read and respond to issues raised in the reading you did and in other people's summaries--does postcolonial theory make sense to you? If not, why not? What is gained from such an analysis? What is lost? And for whom?

Wednesday, March 23:

Class: Responding to *The Tempest* (2): Postcolonial theory--Discussion of selections from pp. xx-xx and postcolonial theory in general.

Homework: Read, pp. xx-xx.

Virtual Class: Respond to issues raised in the reading--does the application of theory to *The Tempest* make sense to you? If not, why not? Which side do you find yourself taking in this debate? Why? Additional

Virtual Class: write a response to Mark Doty's reading. How did hearing and seeing him read change your relationship to the poems? What did you think of the reading overall? What do you think of Doty's poetry? Did he read the poems you hoped he's read? What surprised you? Which poems inspired you to read more? etc.

7:00 pm. Founder's Room, Mead Hall. [Mark Doty](#) will be at Drew for a public reading and discussion

of his work. Please plan to attend this reading, Doty is an important American poet--you won't want to miss this!

Spring is here: Go see S.K.Thoth's "Festad" in Central Park if you possibly can sometime before April 1. Go in groups of four or five (24 is too many). You can find directions at his website and it really is easy. The website will also tell you whether he will be performing on a given day--although sometimes he does not show up, especially if the weather turns cold or it looks as if it might rain. This is FREE performance art, not professional theatre!

You can find his website at <www.skthoth.com/SKTHOTH/Home_Pagex.html>

Aim to arrive at about 4 pm. If Thoth isn't there, observe what else is going on in that part of the park.

Are there other performers? What are they doing? How are the people watching them behaving?

If you want to make a day in the city, go see a Broadway show! Show up at the theatre an hour before the show is due to start and you can generally get tickets for about \$25. Go for something interesting like "Hair Spray" rather than something everyone has already seen! Or go see an Off-Broadway production--check out the *Village Voice* to see what is playing and where. Never been to NYC? Well, now is the time to go. This is homework!!! You can write paper #2 about Thoth if you want to do so.

Week 9

Monday, March 28:

Class: Responding to *The Tempest* (4): Critical controversies over *The Tempest* --Discussion of the selections from pp. xx-xx and theory and politics in general. Why do we study literature in this way? What is gained? What is lost?

Introduction to South Africa, South African Drama, and *Sophiatown*

Homework: Read *Sophiatown* and view the PowerPoint presentation on recent South African history and context for the play (in the "Reserve" folder of the k:drive for this class).

Virtual Class: Respond to *Sophiatown*. What do you think? What themes do you see? What questions do I need to answer win class on Tuesday?

Wednesday, March 30: Brief discussion of Thoth and then discussion of *Sophiatown*.

Homework: Go see S.K.Thoth's "Festad" in Central Park if you possibly can sometime before April 1. See week 9 above. You can find his website at <www.skthoth.com/SKTHOTH/Home_Pagex.html>

If Thoth isn't there, observe what else is going on in that part of the park. Are there other performers? What are they doing? How are the people watching them behaving? Never been to NYC? Well, now is the time to go. This is homework!!! You can write paper #2 about Thoth if you want to do so.

Virtual Class: Post your response to Thoth. Why did I suggest that you go see this performance? What do you think of the world he creates and the story he performs? How does this connect to other things we have read so far this semester?

Week 10

Monday, April 4:

Class: Continued discussion of *Sophiatown*.

Introduction to *Blithedale Romance*.

Homework: Read *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 40-78 (ch. 1-7). Pay attention to words, images, sentences, and the development of character and relationships, etc. You'll need to read quite slowly until you get used to the style. You might even try reading aloud. As you read, try to visualize the action. If you were to make a film of this book, who would you cast in each role? Why? What kind of lighting would you use? And what general mood would you want to create?

Virtual Class: Reactions? Frustrations? What themes do you see developing? Answer any of the questions above--or all of them! What do you want to focus on in class on Thursday?

Wednesday, April 6:

Class: Discussion of [paper #2](#), handouts, and questions. (Due Friday April 22)

Discussion of *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 40-78 (ch. 1-7).

Homework: Read *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 79-123 (ch. 8-13) Pay attention to words, images, sentences. Is the style getting easier as you get used to it? Are you getting a better sense of this "modern arcadia"? What do you think of the place? What do you think of Zenobia? And Priscilla? And Hollingsworth? What do you make of Coverdale's relationship with them? How do you see it evolving?

Virtual Class: Comments? What themes do you see now? What issues? What concerns? Answer any of the questions above--or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Tuesday? What questions remain?

Week 11

Monday, April 11:

Class: Discussion of *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 79-123 (ch. 8-13).

Homework: Read *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 123-164 (ch. 13-20) Pay attention to words, images, sentences, and character development. What do you think of Hollingsworth now, for example? Do chapters 14 and 15 change the way you view him? What about Zenobia in chapter 20? Is she the same Zenobia you saw in chapter 13? And what of Priscilla? Has your attitude to her changed in any way? Finally, think about the narrator (Coverdale). How do you feel about him, especially after the big crisis?

Virtual Class: Comments? What themes do you see now? What issues? What concerns? Answer any of the questions above--or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Thursday? What questions remain?

Wednesday, April 13:

Class: Discussion of *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 123-164 (ch. 13-20).

Homework: Read *Blithedale Romance*, pp. 164-218 (ch. 21-end) Pay attention to words, images, sentences, the way the story develops and the way we learn more about the characters. Think about Moodie for example. Is he what you expected? What is his role in the plot? And Coverdale? Did the story end the way you predicted? What took you by surprise?

Virtual Class: Comments? What questions remain for you? Answer any of the questions above--or all of them! What do you want to discuss in class Tuesday? What questions remain for you?

Week 12

Monday, April 18:

Class: Final discussion of *Blithedale Romance* and Cultural contexts.

Homework: Read David Henry Hwang's "M.Butterfly" ready for the reading and talk tomorrow night.

Virtual Class: Respond to "M.Butterfly" and/or our final discussion of *Blithedale*.

Wednesday, April 20:

Class: Discussion of [paper #3](#) (Due on May 11).

Discussion of any final problems encountered with paper #2 (due Friday).

Brief introduction to powerpoint on African American literature and timeline (in the "Resources" folder on the K:/drive).

Homework: Read Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, pp. 1-77.

Finish Paper #2, due Friday April 16.

Virtual Class: Respond to the opening of *Paradise*. What did you expect after the first chapter? To what extent has the novel been what you expected based on those first pages? What do you think Morrison was doing there?

Friday April 22: Paper #2 due in the box outside my office in S.W.Bowne by 6 p.m. today.

Week 13

Monday, April 25:

Discussion of *Paradise*, pp. 1-77.

Homework: Read Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, pp. 81-138.

Virtual Class: Responses? Questions? Points of confusion? What do you need explained? What themes do you see developing?

Wednesday, April 27:

Class: Discussion of *Paradise*, pp. 81-138

Homework: Read Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, pp. 141-266.

Virtual Class: Responses? Questions? Points of confusion? What do you need explained? What themes do you see developing?

Week 14

Monday, May 2:

Class: Discussion of *Paradise*, pp. 141-266

Homework: Read Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, pp. 269-318.

Wednesday, May 4:-- Last Class:

Class: Discussion of *Paradise*, pp. 269-318 and cultural contexts.

Wrap up of the class, discussion of final project, sign up for final deadlines and appointments to collect work and discuss grades, course evaluations--please don't miss this class.

Homework: Work on paper #3, get some sleep, eat, take care of yourself.

Week 15

Wednesday, May 11: Paper #3 is due in the box outside my office by 6 p.m. today.

(When you drop it off, sign up for an appointment to collect it and find out your final grade!)